



Proclamation

Presented

In Recognition of the 67th Anniversary of the West Loch Disaster

WHEREAS, The West Loch Disaster was a maritime incident that occurred 67 years ago on May 21, 1944 at the United States Naval Base in Pearl Harbor; the incident is not well known because it was kept classified by the United States Government until 1960; and

WHEREAS, The West Loch Disaster transpired from an initial explosion onboard of Landing Ship, Tanks (LST) 351; subsequently fires and explosions began spreading to other ships because the ships were tied to one another loaded with fuel and munitions; the resulting fires led to the eventual sinking of six LSTs; and

WHEREAS, The West Loch Disaster has no exact determined cause; however, it is believed that a mortar round exploded during an unloading operation, thus setting off the chain reaction events; and

WHEREAS, The West Loch Disaster does not have an official record of the total amount of soldiers that were wounded or deceased from this disaster; estimates have the loss of life ranging from 132 to more than 400; and

WHEREAS, The West Loch Disaster led to changes within the United States Navy with their ordinance-handling procedures; including training for handlers, redesigned munitions for safer handling and no longer nesting vessels when ammunition was being handled; and

WHEREAS, The West Loch Disaster will be recognized by Hawai'i's Joint Military Forces on May 21, 2011 at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific as a "Celebration of Life" for West Loch internees;

THEREFORE I, NEIL ABERCROMBIE, Governor, and I, BRIAN SCHATZ, Lieutenant Governor of the State of Hawai'i, do hereby proclaim May 21, 2011 as the

"67th ANNIVERSARY OF THE WEST LOCH DISASTER"

in Hawai'i and urge all the people of the Aloha State to join us in remembering the brave and dedicated individuals who experienced the West Loch Disaster at Pearl Harbor on May 21, 1944.

DONE at the State Capitol, in the Executive Chambers, Honolulu, State of Hawai'i, this fifth day of May, 2011.

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
Governor, State of Hawai'i

BRIAN SCHATZ
Lt. Governor, State of Hawai'i